

Dr M: THE WEST IS TRYING TO RE-COLONISE US

By Wong Chun Wai

PETALING JAYA, Mon. — Western developed nations are using their non-governmental organisations (NGO) to "re-colonise" developing countries, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said environmental, human rights, democratic and other issues had been raised and linked to trade, something which was not done so in the past.

The developed countries, having lost their political power following the end of their empire, were now using their economic clout to revive the powers they used to enjoy as colonists, he said.

The Prime Minister said one NGO being used to re-colonise developing countries was the Greens environmental group which emerged during the 80s.

"They have succeeded in using various tactics, not just merely to protect the environment, but also

to colonise," he said when opening a conference for heads of Malaysian delegations abroad at the National Institute of Public Administration (Intan) here.

Dr Mahathir also simultaneously opened the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations.

He said the Greens had attempted to sabotage the stability of developing nations which threatened the economy of developed countries.

"They do so through various means, including instigation and breaking the laws of target countries," he added.

Dr Mahathir said these organisations had used groups within the nation to check its economic growth, particularly exports that could compete with those from their countries.

On the East Asian Economic Group (EAEG), he called on Malaysian missions to intensify efforts to explain the aims of the EAEG so that it would re-

ceive international backing.

He said the well-intentioned and harmless Malaysian idea was disliked by certain powers because of their geo-political interests.

"Because of that, we are facing difficulties in making the EAEG a success although it is aimed at protecting the global free trade," he said.

On the institute, Dr Mahathir said it would train prospective and serving officers to enable Malaysia to play a more effective role in the international arena.

Diplomats needed to be skilful and knowledgeable in matters on diplomacy and national policies and objectives to achieve success in foreign relations and uphold the nation's image abroad, he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia, being a small developing nation, should understand how to use diplomacy more effectively than the big powers.

The Prime Minister also urged diplomats to focus on economic issues, particularly trade.

"The acceleration of the country's economy growth will depend on external trade," he said, adding that protecting the country's economy in international affairs was far more difficult than seeking political allies.

Dr Mahathir said plans were being made to foster a more effective relationship with countries in the South, including those in South America.

Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid, Foreign Ministry secretary-general Datuk Ahmad Kamil Jaafar and the institute's director-general Datuk Albert S. Talalla were also present.

Dr Mahathir later held a closed-door dialogue with the heads of missions attending the conference.